

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
COUNTY OF YANKTON

State of South Dakota

Plaintiff,

- vs -

FALKENBERG, STEPHEN ROBERT

DOB [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] DEER BLVD

YANKTON, SD 57078

Defendant

FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
AFFIDAVIT OF PROBABLE CAUSE
FOR WARRANTLESS ARREST

FILED

MAR 19 2019

Jody L. Johnson
Yankton County Clerk of Courts
1st Judicial Circuit Court of South Dakota

FALKENBERG, STEPHEN ROBERT

has been arrested and charged with:

22-16-7 - Homicide/ Second Degree

Probable cause for this arrest is as follows:

Tamara Jo LaFramboise (hereinafter referred to as Tamara) was reported as a missing person on Wednesday, March 5th 2019, at 1453 hrs. Mary LaFramboise of Albuquerque New Mexico, the mother of Tamara, called the Yankton County Sheriff's Office to report her daughter as missing.

Mary stated that she normally talks to Tamara regularly and has not talked to her since Friday March 1st, 2019 at approximately 0130 hrs. Mary stated that Tamara was at work at Wilson Trailer when they talked and that Tamara had to use a co workers phone, as hers was broke.

Mary advised me that Tamara was in an on again off again relationship with Stephen Falkenberg (hereinafter referred to as Falkenberg) and that the relationship between the two was very turbulent. Mary told me that Falkenberg has other girlfriends in the area as well.

Chief Deputy Rothschild and Detective Moser talked with Falkenberg on Wednesday March 6th, 2019 and he told them that he last saw Tamara on the morning of Friday March 1st, 2019 at approximately 0815 hrs. Falkenberg told investigators that he had coffee with her at her apartment and that she told him to get the [REDACTED] out and he left.

The last known sighting of Tamara was on 3/1/19 at 0217 hrs, when she was leaving the Yankton WalMart after purchasing an alarm clock and two bags of chips. That was the last time Tamara's only debit card was used per bank records. Falkenberg's 2015 Ford Pickup was seen at Wal Mart just before Tamara entered the store and was seen leaving WalMart just after she exited the store. The same pickup is on video picking Tamara up from work minutes before arriving at WalMart. Falkenberg admitted to the investigators that he did pick Tamara up from work that morning. Falkenberg's pickup has unique identifiers as it is jacked up and has large stickers in the back window.

Mary stated that she had a text conversation with Falkenberg on Monday March 4th, 2019 were he advised her that he was dealing with the doctor all day because he fell and hurt his hand the other day and broke two fingers. Investigators that talked with Steve on March 6th, 2019 stated they noticed Steve was wearing a brace on one of his hands.

An interview done with [REDACTED], a friend and co worker of Falkenberg's Fiance, [REDACTED] indicated that Falkenberg told [REDACTED] he crushed two knuckles from punching an icicle. [REDACTED] also revealed that [REDACTED] told her she had to stay at Falkenberg's house and babysit his dogs while he (Falkenberg) made a trip back to Michigan. This trip would have happened within a day or two of the last time Tamara was seen.

On 3-15-19, I was contacted by Mary LaFramboise. Mary stated that Falkenberg had just left [REDACTED] S. Deer Boulevard, residence of Tamra. Mary said Falkenberg wanted a vacuum cleaner in the residence back and stated it was his (Falkenberg). Mary advised she refused to give the vacuum cleaner back to Falkenberg. Mary said Falkenberg then left. I instructed Mary to bring the vacuum cleaner to the Yankton Sheriff's Department. Mary arrived at the Yankton Sheriff's Department along with [REDACTED] Tamara's daughter, with the vacuum. [REDACTED] turned the vacuum over to me. The vacuum was then placed in evidence.

On 3-16-19, Falkenberg came to our office that morning and wanted the vacuum cleaner. The on duty deputy stated that

Falkenberg was pacing in the lobby and seemed unusually nervous. The deputy advised Falkenberg that he was not getting the vacuum cleaner back. Falkenberg then left the area.

On 3-12-19 at 1127 hrs, I emailed the reports in this case as well as the SDFC Missing Persons flier to Sgt. Justin Hofer of the Menominee Michigan Police Department. I had earlier talked with Sgt. Hofer by phone and advised him of our investigation and asked him if knew of Steve Falkenberg. Sgt. Hofer said that the Falkenberg name was familiar but he was not aware of a Stephen Falkenberg. I advised Sgt. Hofer that I would keep in contact with him as the case developed.

On 3-16-19 at 1317 hrs, I received a phone call from Officer Darrin Kudwa of the Menominee, Michigan Police Department. Officer Kudwa told me that they were advised of a body in a creek outside of Menominee and that the Menominee County Sheriff's Office was currently on scene conducting an investigation. Officer Kudwa stated that the head, hands and feet had been removed from the body, were not with the body, and have not been located at this time. Officer Kudwa advised me that several tattoos on the body were visible. Officer Kudwa said that he would forward my information on to the investigator that was on scene.

On 3-16-19 at 1351 hrs, I received a call from Menominee Michigan Lieutenant Detective Jeff Brunell (hereinafter referred to as Brunell) who stated he was at the scene of the body discovery. Brunell stated that the body appeared to be a female that was missing the head, hands and ankles. Brunell stated that the body was laying face down in a creek bed that contained water. Brunell advised me that their crime scene unit was en route to process the scene.

Brunell asked if our missing female had any tattoos and, if so, he wanted a list of those tattoos. I read the description and placement of tattoos on Tamara's body. This list was obtained from a recent Yankton County Jail booking of Tamara LaFramboise. Brunell stated that he believed the body in the water had tattoos as I described them. Brunell stated that he would wait until the body was pulled from the water for a closer look at the tattoos and he would call me back.

On 3-16-19 at 1815 hrs, I received another call from Brunell where he stated that the body has been removed from the water and that the tattoos I listed were consistent with the tattoos on the body at their scene. I was later able to locate two pictures of Tammy LaFramboise on her Facebook page. These two pictures partially showed a cross tattoo on her left shoulder. I took a screen shot of those tattoos and sent them to Brunell via text. Brunell later sent me a picture of the left shoulder area of the body just after they pulled it out of the water. I observed the tattoo on the left shoulder of that body was a cross and appeared to be the same design and placement of the tattoo in the Facebook pictures.

Brunell also told me that it appears the body was thrown over a bridge and into the creek. Brunell advised me that the creek bed the body was found in is in a rural area that is not travelled much and is 1.4 miles from a home owned by Steve Falkenberg's brother.

Brunell stated that they talked with two of Steve Falkenberg's brothers that live in the area and it was confirmed that Steve Falkenberg had visited them since March 1st.

Brunell also stated that the crime lab stated the body was naked in the water and that her clothes were removed after she was frozen. Brunell said that the body was currently being transported to Fon Du Lac Wisconsin for a Monday Autopsy.

On 3-16-19 at approximately 2027 hrs, I received a phone call from Detective Brunell who stated that he just learned that Falkenberg was on his way to Michigan. Brunell stated that he learned this by talking with Falkenberg's brother in Michigan. Brunell advised me that he was told Falkenberg told his brother that he wanted to be interviewed by Michigan authorities and not South Dakota authorities.

On 3-17-19 at approximately 1130 hrs, I spoke with Detective Brunell by phone. Brunell advised me that Falkenberg called him and told him that he retained a lawyer and that he would not be talking with law enforcement without his lawyer present. Brunell stated that while talking with Falkenberg he noticed that Falkenberg's voice was very shaky and that he appeared to be in a panic.

Brunell also advised me that Falkenberg told his brother that he had to stay at a hotel in Tomah, Wisconsin on Friday night March 1st, 2019 as the weather was bad.

It should be noted that on 3-18-19, the Yankton County Registrar of Deeds Office was contacted about the above aforementioned addresses. It was learned that Falkenberg is currently paying the property taxes on both aforementioned

addresses and that Falkenberg currently owns both properties.

It is also known that Falkenberg frequents both aforementioned addresses. Also on 3-18-19, Detective Moser of the Yankton Sheriff's Office advised that he observed Falkenberg at [REDACTED] Avenue. It should be further noted that the family of Tamara reported to the Yankton County Sheriff's Office on 3-18-19 seeing Falkenberg at his residence of [REDACTED] Deer Boulevard.

On 3-18-19 at approximately 1:07 PM, it was learned that Falkenberg had recent contact with his daughter [REDACTED] of Sioux Falls SD. This information came from [REDACTED] husband, [REDACTED] during a phone call between [REDACTED] and Chief Deputy Rothschild. During the phone call, [REDACTED] informed law enforcement that on Saturday March 16th 2019, Falkenberg arrived at [REDACTED] residence in Sioux Falls. During that time [REDACTED] and Falkenberg had a conversation and after that conversation was done [REDACTED] told [REDACTED] that Falkenberg admitted to getting into an altercation with Tamara LaFramboise at her residence of [REDACTED] Deer Boulevard apartment [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] told Rothschild he was advised that Tamara swung at Falkenberg with a bat striking him in the hand. [REDACTED] also told Rothschild that Falkenberg admitted to [REDACTED] that he pushed Tamara against the wall and that she was dead. [REDACTED] advised [REDACTED] said Falkenberg did not go in to anymore detail as to how Tamara died other than she was dead.

On 3-18-19 at approximately 4:32 PM, [REDACTED] was interviewed by SA Glenn with the SD DCI in Sioux Falls, SD. SA Glenn stated [REDACTED] told him that on 3-16-19 her father, Falkenberg arrived at her residence in Sioux Falls. SA Glenn advised the following was [REDACTED] had informed him during the interview.

[REDACTED] advised that Falkenberg talked to her and her brother, [REDACTED] outside of her residence. [REDACTED] said Falkenberg was crying and said he got in to an argument with Tamara at her residence in Yankton. [REDACTED] advised the argument was due to Falkenberg accusing Tamara of cheating on him with a guy named Rick.

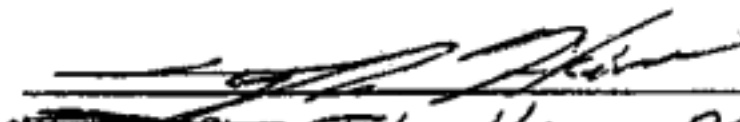
[REDACTED] said Falkenberg told her that Tamara picked up a bat and swung it at him. [REDACTED] stated she does not know if that is how Falkenberg's hand got injured and Falkenberg did not say. [REDACTED] advised Falkenberg told her he pushed Tamara and she fell and hit her head. [REDACTED] advised Falkenberg told her that Tamara was dead.

[REDACTED] advised Falkenberg told her that he (Falkenberg) knew Tamara was dead. [REDACTED] said Falkenberg did not know what to do so he drove around on county roads and then decided to drive to Michigan.

[REDACTED] said that Falkenberg advised he put Tamara's body near their family farm in Michigan. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] had somehow learned that Tamara's body was dismembered so she brought up the dismemberment to Falkenberg. [REDACTED] stated she did not know how [REDACTED] knew Tamara had been dismembered. [REDACTED] advised Falkenberg told her that he dismembered Tamara because he did not want her to be identified.

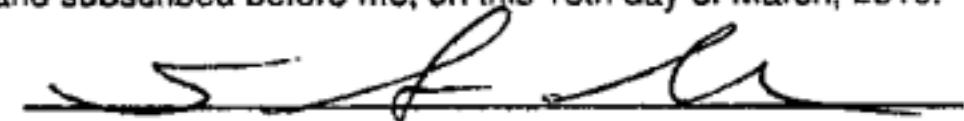
[REDACTED] said she brought up the issue of the police finding the tools he used to dismember Tamara. [REDACTED] advised Falkenberg told her that he got rid of the tools and that he wore gloves when he dismembered Tamara. [REDACTED] stated she also brought up the concern of the police being able to track Falkenberg's cell phone. [REDACTED] advised that Falkenberg questions whether police could do that or not. [REDACTED] said that was the majority of the conversation with Falkenberg.

Signed


Tyler Heine DCI d8-4

Sworn to and subscribed before me, on this 18th day of March, 2019.

Signed



Notary Public

My Commission Expires 12-1-23 (SEAL)

Probable Cause Determination

On the basis of the foregoing affidavit, I hereby determine that probable cause to believe that the arrestee has committed the crime of:

22-16-7 - Homicide/ Second Degree

____ Exists

____ Does Not Exist

Bond Amount \$ _____

ATTEST:

Signed

Date / Time

Yankton County Clerk of Courts

BY:
